

United States Senate

WASHINGTON, DC 20510

November 5, 2007

Dear Colleague:

We write to encourage your support for the Supplemental Disaster Assistance Program that was approved by the Senate Finance Committee, and will be considered this week by the Senate as part of the 2007 Farm Bill. We hope you will join us in opposing any effort to weaken this Program or divert funding to other farm bill provisions.

This Program addresses disaster losses for all crops, including specialty crops and forage production, as well as for the livestock sector. Unlike ad hoc disaster assistance that has often come years after the disaster occurred, and each time with varied amounts of assistance and different eligibility requirements, this program will be predictable, timely and administratively efficient.

Qualifying producers who demonstrate they have suffered actual weather-related losses will receive assistance based on a pre-set, whole-farm formula. In addition, the program is a responsible complement to other risk management programs such as crop insurance and the Non Insured Assistance Program.

This program represents real reform compared to the way Congress has provided disaster assistance in recent years. By creating a dedicated source of funding, it serves to protect the budgetary resources for other agricultural priorities that have been raided in the past to provide offsets for disaster spending. It eliminates the addition of non-disaster related provisions that have been attached to previous measures, and it addresses many of the shortfalls and potential abuses that have been identified with prior ad hoc programs.

The importance of agriculture disaster assistance cannot be overstated. The Gulf hurricanes, multi-year drought in the Plains States and the Southeast, and the fires in California all show that disasters will strike each and every part of our nation at some point in time. A federal response will continue to be necessary.

While the weather is uncertain, disaster assistance for our farmers should be more predictable. The bottom line is that this program is good for producers, consumers and taxpayers. It will provide fiscally responsible and predictable assistance to our producers who have suffered from natural disasters, helping ensure our ability to continue to produce the safest, most affordable and abundant food supply in the world.

November 5, 2007

Page 2

We urge you to support the Supplemental Disaster Assistance Program as part of the Senate's new farm legislation, and join with us in opposing any amendments that would undermine this important program.

Sincerely,

Max Baucus

Orin Hatch

Kent Conrad

Larry Chambers

Ed Johnson

John Thune

Ken Salazar

Reid Emswiler

Jeff Bingaman

Maria Cantwell

Ang Klobuchar

Byron Dorgan

Patty Murray

Jon Tester

Mike Enzi

to Benjamin Nelson

November 5, 2007

Page 3

Jeff Bond

Hillary Rodham Clinton

Noam Coleman

Mike Croy